

## **Diane Remembers Helen**

Her name is Helen Mae Carlson but I can not imagine her being called anything except Grandma. She is a slender woman in her seventies with dark brown hair and faded blue eyes. She sits up very straight and seems to glide when she walks because she is very conscious of her posture. At a glance, my grandmother may not seem to be a beauty but one must realize the tenderness of her personality. This is what makes her a remarkable individual.

My grandmother is a woman who loves children. I am her only grandchild and so I receive bundles of love. My grandmother loves to please and will do anything to make me happy.

My grandparents live in Bellevue and while I was living in Mercer Island I saw them very frequently. I spent practically every weekend with them and it was fun. There were many pleasures in staying over at Grandma's. She would wait on me hand and foot, all I had to do was ask. We would play games such as bridge, backgammon, checkers, and chess. Somehow I would always win. I would always look forward to snacks at her house because she had everything to eat and if I wanted more she would send grandpa to the store.

Nighttime was the best because all we would do was watch television and eat snacks. My grandma always seemed to fall asleep around eight o'clock but would wake up again at ten o'clock because she did not want to miss "Hunter."

In the morning, my grandma would wake up at about six o'clock and would try to sneak out of the room so that I would not wake up. The door creaked so I always did wake up but would pretend to be asleep. After a few hours when I had decided it was time to announce my presence I would yell at the top of my lungs, "Grandma!!". Then she would rush in and turn on the television for me.

Breakfast always consisted of homemade French fries and hot cocoa with marshmallows. After spending about two or three hours in bed watching the television, I would eventually get up and my grandpa would drive me home.

One might think that I took advantage of my grandmother but this was definitely not the case. It was delighting to her to have me happy and content. She felt it was her duty to keep me satisfied and it pleased her to see me smile.

One gift I feel that both of my grandparents have given to me is the gift of music. I have been playing the piano ever since I can remember and I owe it all to them. It was their hard wood piano on which I learned my first song while both of them sat with me and smiled with pride. When I took up the viola it was at their house where I practiced and was critiqued.

As an unsure child growing up in a very large and strange world, my grandma provided me with a sense

of security and comfort. Her house was full of love. It was a place where I did not have to be afraid because I knew I would be accepted and could do no wrong. When my parents were not around or just did not understand me, my grandma was always there to listen and agree. She was someone I could count on to be on my side. We had a special bond that still remains although perhaps it is not as apparent due to society's pressure to grow up. I am very proud of my grandma and will cherish the memories of our experiences together which helped shape the person I am today.